



Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot

State of Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5101)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

EPA's Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower States, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield is a site, or portion thereof, that has actual or perceived contamination and an active potential for redevelopment or reuse. Since 1995, EPA has funded more than 200 Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilots, at up to \$200,000 each, to support creative two-year explorations and demonstrations of brownfields solutions. The Pilots are intended to provide EPA, States, Tribes, municipalities, and communities with useful information and strategies as they continue to seek new methods to promote a unified approach to site assessment, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment.

BACKGROUND

EPA has selected the State of Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) for a Brownfields Pilot. As part of its waste site cleanup program, DEP uses State funds to address immediate risks at sites where no resources are available to conduct an assessment and cleanup. DEP then places priority liens on the properties to secure future reimbursement. Of the estimated 7,000 contaminated sites throughout the State, there are currently 78 priority liens; more than half of these lien properties are in economically distressed areas. While proven to be a very effective tool for cost recovery at many sites, the only way to clear the lien at an abandoned property is through a public sale of the property. Since DEP typically does not conduct a complete site assessment and cleanup at these sites, prospective purchasers are discouraged from participating in public sales due to the unknown costs of cleanup. DEP plans to use the Pilot to create and test a process for addressing this barrier to assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment of brownfields in Massachusetts. The Pilot will focus on the former Microfab, Inc. site in Amesbury (population 15,800). Amesbury is a typical New England mill town located in northeastern Massachusetts. The per capita income of Amesbury residents is among the lowest 10% in the State.

PILOT SNAPSHOT



State of Massachusetts
Department of
Environmental Protection

Date of Announcement:
July 1998

Amount: \$200,000

Profile: The Pilot targets the abandoned Microfab, Inc. site in Amesbury, Massachusetts for assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment.

Contacts:

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Visit the EPA Region 1 Brownfields web site at:
<http://www.epa.gov/region01/remed/brnflid/>

For further information, including specific Pilot contacts, additional Pilot information, brownfields news and events, and publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields web site at:
<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/>

because of low-wage jobs in the City. Microfab is an abandoned high-tech facility in a prime location near major transportation corridors. A higher priority lien and unknown levels of contamination have prevented private developers from completing assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment of the site.

OBJECTIVES

Massachusetts DEP wants to work with communities and other State agencies to develop a process that will enable private parties to assume responsibility for cleanup and redevelopment of sites with liens. The Pilot will enable the State to create a model that can be applied in 51 other communities. Pilot funds will be used to conduct a Phase II site assessment, risk characterization, technology evaluation, and cleanup cost estimate for the Microfab site in Amesbury. The City of Amesbury will facilitate public participation in redevelopment decision making and provide redevelopment incentives.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Activities planned as part of this Pilot include:

- Completing a comprehensive Phase II site assessment and risk characterization of the Microfab property;
- Evaluating cleanup technologies for potential use at the site, including assessment of innovative technologies to reduce cleanup costs; and
- Estimating cleanup costs for the site.

The cooperative agreement for this Pilot has not yet been negotiated; therefore, activities described in this fact sheet are subject to change.